United Nations A/52/680

General Assembly
Fifty-second session

Distr.: General

14 November 1997
Original: English

Agenda item 129

Financing of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ), which was established by the Security Council in its resolution 797 (1992) of 16 December 1992, completed its mandate with the appointment on 16 December 1994 of the new Government of Mozambique. The present report provides updated information on the disposition of the assets of ONUMOZ which appear in the report dated 31 July 1995 (A/49/649/Add.3). The inventory value of the Operation's assets as at 30 April 1995 was $38.5 million. The disposition of assets was consistent with the guiding principles endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 49/233 A of 23 December 1994 and with respect to the assets of ONUMOZ, in resolution 49/235 of 10 March 1995.

The action to be taken by the General Assembly, as set out in paragraph 13, is to take note of the disposition of the assets of ONUMOZ.

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I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) was established by the Security Council in its resolution 797 (1992) of 16 December 1992. The Operation's mandate was accomplished with the appointment on 16 December 1994 of the new Government of Mozambique.

2. Initial proposals for the disposition of ONUMOZ property were submitted to the General Assembly in the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of ONUMOZ dated 31 January 1995 (A/49/649/Add.2). Further details on the disposal of assets were presented in annexes IV and V to the ONUMOZ financing report dated 31 July 1995 (A/49/649/Add.3). The present report provides updated information on this subject.

3. The disposition of the assets of peacekeeping operations is guided by the proposals of the Secretary-General contained in paragraph 110 of his report of 25 May 1994 (A/48/945 and Corr.1) and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained in paragraph 116 of its report of 18 November 1994 (A/49/664), which were endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 49/233 A of 23 December 1994. These principles are as follows:

   (a) Equipment in good condition that conforms to established standardization or is considered compatible with existing equipment will be redeployed to other United Nations operations elsewhere in the world or will be placed in reserve to form the start-up kits for use by future missions;

   (b) Equipment not required by other peacekeeping missions but which may be useful for operations of other United Nations agencies, international organizations or non-governmental organizations and which it is not feasible to keep in reserve, will be sold to a relevant agency or organization;

   (c) Any equipment or property not required or which it is not feasible to dispose of in the above manner or which is in poor condition will be subject to commercial disposal within the country, following standard United Nations regulations and procedures;

   (d) Any surplus mission assets remaining after disposition under the terms referred to under subparagraphs (a) to (c) above, and/or any assets which have already been installed in the country and which, if dismantled, would in fact set back the rehabilitation process of the country, will be contributed to the duly recognized Government of the respective country. This refers in particular to airfield installations and equipment, bridges and mine-clearing equipment.

4. The Advisory Committee, after reviewing the proposals of the Secretary-General, recommended in respect of paragraph 3 (d) above that the following be taken into account: (a) all efforts should be made to obtain from the Government its agreement to compensate the United Nations in a mutually acceptable form (contributions, services, tax exemption, etc.) for the residual value of any surplus mission assets installed in the country which could not be otherwise disposed of; and (b) the General Assembly should, as a matter of principle, be requested to approve any such disposition of mission assets which would provide for free-of-charge contribution to the Government.

5. In its resolution 49/235 of 10 March 1995, the General Assembly, having considered proposals of the Secretary-General on the disposition of the Operation's assets contained in the report on the financing of ONUMOZ dated 31 January 1995 (A/49/649/Add.2), decided, *inter alia*, that assets or installations that could not be dismantled, including airfield installations, should be donated to the Government of Mozambique. By the same resolution, the Assembly decided further to accept the proposal of the Secretary-General to donate certain assets to the mine-clearance programme on the understanding that it was not cost-effective to move them and that they could not be financed through the voluntary contributions.

II. Disposition of the assets of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique

6. The total original inventory value of all ONUMOZ assets as at 30 April 1995, as indicated in the report on the financing of ONUMOZ dated 31 July 1995 (A/49/649/Add.3), was estimated at approximately $36.9 million. Upon verification and reconciliation of the ONUMOZ property records and original purchase prices, the total value of the Operation's property has been adjusted to $38.5 million (see annex I.A, column 18). The variations in the original asset values shown in column 20 of annex I.A are attributable to the inclusion of the value of the vehicle spare parts under the vehicular equipment category, and to the reconciliation adjustments under the other five categories of equipment.

7. In accordance with principles set out in paragraphs 3 and 5 above, the ONUMOZ assets have been classified into the four groups as indicated in columns 2 to 13 of annex I.A. Columns 14 to 16 of annex I.A provide information on the assets which were written off due to normal wear and tear and owing to losses from theft and accidents. Consistent with the previous report of the Secretary-General dated 31 July 1995 (A/49/649/Add.3), the Operation's assets have been placed into six general categories covering air support, communications, and electronic data-processing equipment, as well as generators, general stores and other equipment, and vehicles. Charts showing the distribution of the assets of ONUMOZ by disposal action and equipment category are presented in figures 1 and 2, respectively, of annex II to the present report.

8. Based on the observation made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 18 of its report dated 7 April 1997 (A/51/861) on the financing of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) that the final disposition of assets should be reported by classifying assets in the same categories and in the same detail as when they were budgeted and approved, the present report provides, to the extent possible, the itemized information on the equipment procured for ONUMOZ since its inception.

9. In accordance with the methodology for the accounting of assets set out in the report of the Secretary-General on the management of peacekeeping assets dated 29 May 1996 (A/50/965), assets transferred to other peacekeeping operations, to the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, and to activities financed under the United Nations regular budget are stated at their original values (see annex I.B). ONUMOZ property transferred to the United Nations agencies or programmes that are not funded from assessed contributions (annex I.C) and assets donated and written off (annex I.E and F, respectively) are stated at both the original and the depreciated values. Information on depreciation rates was provided in annex VI to the report on the financing of ONUMOZ dated 31 July 1995 (A/49/649/Add.3).

10. As detailed in annex I.B, group I comprises 83 per cent of all assets and has an inventory value of $32.0 million. These assets have been transferred, at no cost, to the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA), the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM), the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), United Nations Headquarters, the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, UNMIH, the United Nations Office in Burundi, the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), the United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM), the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories (UNSCO) and the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO). Of the total amount of $32.0 million, assets valued at $30.6 million have been acknowledged to date as having been received by the missions to which they, according to ONUMOZ records, were transferred. The difference of $1.4 million, which is under investigation, pertains to assets transferred to UNAMIR, UNAVEM, the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, and UNMIH.

11. Group II, shown in annex I.C to the present report, consists of assets with an inventory value of $0.9 million (depreciated value of $0.5 million) and represents 2 per cent of the total value of ONUMOZ assets. These assets have been transferred to the offices in Rwanda of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations

Development Programme (UNDP). Group III, shown in annex I.D, includes assets valued at $0.5 million (1 per cent of the ONUMOZ total asset value), which were sold to commercial entities in Mozambique and to the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO). The proceeds from sales in the amount of $339,735 were credited to the Special Account for ONUMOZ. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/235, referred to in paragraph 5 above, the Operation's assets comprising group IV in annex I.E and valued at $3.3 million (9 per cent of the total assets value) were donated to the Government of Mozambique and to the demining programme. In addition, in order to ensure expeditious distribution to the local population of the residual medical supplies from surplus ONUMOZ stocks not required in other peacekeeping missions, vaccines and medicines with an original purchase cost of $31,200 were transferred to the WHO Office in Mozambique.

12. Annex I.F comprises assets valued at $1.8 million (5 per cent of the total value of ONUMOZ assets) and includes the written-off equipment with no remaining useful life owing to normal wear and tear, as well as assets written off as a result of accidents and loss due to theft.

III. Action to be taken by the General Assembly at its fifty-second session

13. The action to be taken by the General Assembly at its fifty-second session in respect of the present report is to take note of the disposition of the assets of ONUMOZ.

Annex I
Disposition of the assets of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique

A. Summary statement

(Amounts are in United States dollars and represent the original value of the assets)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)
Equipment category	*Group I Assets transferred to other peacekeeping operations and United Nations entities, or to UNLB*			*Group II Assets transferred to United Nations agencies or programmes*			*Group III Assets sold*			*Group IV Assets donated*			*Assets written off*			*Total*		*Total as per A/49/649/Add.3*	*Difference*
	Quantity	*Value*	*Percentage of total*	*Quantity*	*Value*	*Percentage of total*	*Quantity*	*Value*	*Percentage of total*	*Quantity*	*Value*	*Percentage of total*	*Quantity*	*Value*	*Percentage of total*	*Quantity*	*Value*	*Value*	*(18) - (19)*
Air support equipment	150	1 374 062	89.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	40 996	2.7	5	116 690	7.6	159	1 531 748	1 531 748	-
Communications equipment	6 178	7 226 895	94.8	6	7 430	0.1	21	6 050	0.1	208	335 072	4.4	60	46 328	0.6	6 473	7 621 775	7 588 342	33 433
Electronic data processing equipment	2 755	2 603 071	96	13	17 501	0.6	7	7 285	0.3	50	28 475	1.1	45	47 431	2	2 384	2 703 763	2 697 150	6 613
Generators	522	1 159 559	99	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	5 114	0.4	6	7 187	0.6	530	1 171 860	1 126 537	45 323
General stores and other equipment	-	5 332 079	76.3	-	7 092	0.1	-	305 873	4.4	-	1 317 302	18.8	-	26 901	0.4	-	6 989 247	6 991 782	(2 535)
Vehicles	1 111	14 304 562	77	65	885 810	5	10	146 285	1	185	1 622 109	9	136	1 565 111	8	1 507	18 523 877	17 004 817	1 519 060
Total	**10 716**	**32 000 228**	**83**	**84**	**917 833**	**2**	**38**	**465 493**	**1**	**449**	**3 349 068**	**9**	**252**	**1 809 648**	**5**	**11 053**	**38 542 270**	**36 940 376**	**1 601 894**

B. Assets transferred to other peacekeeping operations, to the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, or to activities financed under the United Nations regular budget

(Amounts are in United States dollars and represent the original value of the assets)

Equipment category	MINUGUA		MINURSO		UNAMIR		UNAVEM		UNFICYP		UNHQ		UNLB		Total carried over to next page	
	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity
Air support equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	**774 062**	**149**	-	-	-	-	**600 000**	**1**	**1 374 062**	**150**
Communications equipment																
UHF equipment	11 374	20	37 259	24	-	-	59 586	16	-	-	-	-	61 673	27	169 892	87
VHF equipment	-	-	65 387	86	228 177	288	671 934	602	-	-	-	-	785 454	1 230	1 750 952	2206
HF equipment	-	-	219 974	50	-	-	751 334	355	-	-	-	-	840 326	223	1 811 634	628
Antenna	-	-	-	-	-	-	78 876	69	-	-	-	-	-	-	78 876	69
Satellite equipment	29 235	3	128 600	9	-	-	197 646	24	24 361	1	384 960	8	430 538	40	1 195 340	85
Telephone equipment	1 695	1	-	-	-	-	205 260	598	-	-	-	-	65 592	297	272 547	896
Other communications equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	731 675	847	-	-	-	-	378 288	562	1 109 963	1409
Subtotal	**42 304**	**24**	**451 220**	**169**	**228 177**	**288**	**2 696 311**	**2 511**	**24 361**	**1**	**384 960**	**8**	**2 561 871**	**2 379**	**6 389 204**	**5380**
Electronic data processing equipment																
Desktop computer	-	-	-	-	184 890	98	356 654	203	-	-	36 635	21	445 543	239	1 023 722	561
Laptop computer	-	-	-	-	64 758	30	72 706	34	-	-	44 180	18	195 091	91	376 735	173
Monitor	-	-	-	-	30 550	93	63 700	196	-	-	16 900	51	79 366	243	190 516	583
Printer	-	-	-	-	46 892	50	140 796	230	-	-	18 312	34	203 462	427	409 462	741
Server	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	201 321	5	201 321	5
Other EDP equipment	-	-	-	-	38 430	100	177 319	386	-	-	30 600	84	46 788	12	293 137	582
Subtotal	-	-	-	-	**365 520**	**371**	**811 175**	**1 049**	-	-	**146 627**	**208**	**1 171 571**	**1 017**	**1 323 322**	2645
Generators	-	-	-	-	**109 632**	**50**	**513 050**	**273**	-	-	-	-	**536 877**	**199**	**1 159 559**	**522**
General stores and other equipment	-	-	-	-	**105 967**	-	**4 364 268**	-	-	-	**13 782**	-	**848 062**	-	**5 332 079**	-
Vehicles																
Minibus	-	-	-	-	-	-	725 028	74	-	-	-	-	1 769 967	179	2 494 995	253
Bus, medium	-	-	-	-	-	-	80 044	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	80 044	3
Forklift	-	-	-	-	-	-	415 018	8	-	-	-	-	90 126	2	505 144	10
Jeep 4x4	-	-	-	-	-	-	2 546 703	213	-	-	-	-	1 769 110	124	4 315 813	337
Panel van	-	-	-	-	-	-	105 714	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	105 714	5
Pickup, double cabin	-	-	-	-	424 060	50	1 609 501	188	-	-	-	-	671 879	80	2 705 440	318
Pickup, single cabin	-	-	-	-	-	-	117 686	9	-	-	-	-	96 577	8	214 263	17
Ambulance	-	-	-	-	-	-	20 755	2	-	-	-	-	10 377	1	31 132	3
Sedan, light	-	-	-	-	-	-	380 281	44	-	-	-	-	93 499	9	473 780	53
Sedan, medium	-	-	-	-	-	-	178 481	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	178 481	10
Trailer, fuel	-	-	-	-	-	-	10 843	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	10 843	5
Trailer, water	-	-	-	-	-	-	109 756	53	-	-	-	-	-	-	109 756	53
Truck, cargo	-	-	-	-	-	-	481 209	9	-	-	-	-	165 766	4	646 975	13
Truck, cargo w/crane	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Truck, recovery	-	-	-	-	-	-	372 727	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	372 727	4
Spares and other equipment	-	-	-	-	33 798	-	411 833	-	-	-	-	-	1 067 196	-	1 512 827	-
Subtotal	-	-	-	-	**457 858**	**50**	**7 565 579**	**627**	-	-	-	-	**5 734 497**	**407**	**13 757 934**	**1084**
Total	**42 304**	**24**	**451 220**	**169**	**1 267 154**	**759**	**16 724 445**	**4 609**	**24 361**	**1**	**545 369**	**216**	**11 452 878**	**4 003**	**30 507 731**	**9781**

Equipment category	Total carried over from previous page		UNMIH		UN Office in Burundi		UNOMIG		UNOMIL		UNOSOM		UNPROFOR		UNSCO		UNTSO		Grand total	
	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity
Air support equipment	**1 374 062**	**150**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1 374 062**	**150**
Communications equipment																				
UHF equipment	169 892	87	403 375	390	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**573 267**	477
VHF equipment	1 750 952	2206	-	-	-	-	23 770	50	20 614	3	-	-	198 636	320	9 525	20	-	-	**2 003 497**	2 599
HF equipment	1 811 634	628	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18 431	4	**1 830 065**	632
Antenna	78 876	69	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4 140	3	**83 016**	72
Satellite equipment	1 195 340	85	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	139 300	7	-	-	-	-	19 900	1	**1 354 540**	93
Telephone equipment	272 547	896	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**272 547**	896
Other communications equipment	1 109 963	1409	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1 109 963**	1 409
Subtotal	**6 389 204**	**5380**	**403 375**	**390**	**-**	**-**	**23 770**	**50**	**20 614**	**3**	**139 300**	**7**	**198 636**	**320**	**9 525**	**20**	**42 471**	**8**	**7 226 895**	**6 178**
Electronic data processing equipment																				
Desktop computer	1 023 722	561	-	-	4 530	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	65 685	22	**1 093 937**	585
Laptop computer	376 735	173	-	-	4 442	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**381 177**	175
Monitor	190 516	583	-	-	650	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8 125	28	**199 291**	613
Printer	409 462	741	-	-	2 774	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12 252	25	**424 488**	768
Server	201 321	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**201 321**	5
Other EDP equipment	293 137	582	-	-	720	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9 000	25	**302 857**	609
Subtotal	**2 494 893**	**2645**	**-**	**-**	**13 116**	**10**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**95 062**	**100**	**2 603 071**	**2 755**
Generators	**1 159 559**	**522**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1 159 559**	**522**
General stores and other equipment	**5 332 079**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**5 332 079**	-
Vehicles																				
Minibus	2 494 995	253	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**2 494 995**	253
Bus, medium	80 044	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**80 044**	3
Forklift	505 144	10	399 976	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**905 120**	18
Jeep 4x4	4 315 813	337	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**4 315 813**	337
Panel van	105 714	5	63 429	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**169 143**	8
Pickup, double cabin	2 705 440	318	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**2 705 440**	318
Pickup, single cabin	214 263	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**214 263**	17
Ambulance	31 132	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**31 132**	3
Sedan, light	473 780	53	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**473 780**	53
Sedan, medium	178 481	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**178 481**	10
Trailer, fuel	10 843	5	10 843	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**21 686**	10
Trailer, water	109 756	53	18 411	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**128 167**	63
Truck, cargo	646 975	13	46 883	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**693 858**	14
Truck, cargo w/crane	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Truck, recovery	372 727	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**372 727**	4
Spares and other equipment	1 512 827	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7 086	-	-	-	-	-	**1 519 913**	-
Subtotal	**13 757 934**	**1084**	**539 542**	**27**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**7 086**	-	-	-	-	-	**14 304 562**	**1 111**
	30 507 731	**9781**	**942 917**	**417**	**13 116**	**10**	**23 770**	**50**	**20 614**	**3**	**139 300**	**7**	**205 722**	**320**	**9 525**	**20**	**137 533**	**108**	**32 000 228**	**10 716**

C. Assets transferred to United Nations agencies or programmes

(United States dollars)

Equipment category	UNDP			WHO			UNHCR			Total		
	Original value	Depreciated value	Quantity	Original value	Depreciated value	Quantity	Original value	Depreciated value	Quantity	Original value	Depreciated value	Quantity
Air support equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Communications equipment												
UHF equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
VHF equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
HF equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Antenna	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Satellite equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Telephone equipment	630	504	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	630	504	1
Other communications equipment	6 800	5 440	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	6 800	5 440	5
Subtotal	**7 430**	**5 944**	**6**	-	-	-	-	-	-	**7 430**	**5 944**	**6**
Electronic data processing equipment												
Desktop computer	9 735	5 187	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	9 735	5 187	4
Laptop computer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Monitor	2 600	1 218	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	2 600	1 218	4
Printer	3 006	1 619	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3 006	1 619	3
Server	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other EDP equipment	2 160	1 288	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2 160	1 288	2
Subtotal	**17 501**	**9 312**	**13**	-	-	-	-	-	-	**17 501**	**9 312**	**13**
Generators	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
General stores and other equipment	**7 092**	**4 067**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**7 092**	**4 067**	-
Vehicles												
Minibus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bus, medium	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Forklift	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jeep 4x4	-	-	-	-	-	-	846 581	512 013	50	846 581	512 013	50
Panel van	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pickup, double cabin	-	-	-	39 229	28 622	15	-	-	-	39 229	28 622	15
Pickup, single cabin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ambulance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sedan, light	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sedan, medium	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trailer, fuel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trailer, water	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Truck, cargo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Truck, cargo w/crane	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Truck, recovery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spares and other equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	-	-	-	**39 229**	**28 622**	**15**	**846 581**	**512 013**	**50**	**885 810**	**540 635**	**65**
Total	**32 023**	**19 323**	**19**	**39 229**	**28 622**	**15**	**846 581**	**512 013**	**50**	**917 833**	**559 958**	**84**

D. Sold assets

(United States dollars)

Equipment category	Commercial entities			RENAMO			Total		
	Original value	Proceeds from sales	Quantity	Original value	Proceeds from sales	Quantity	Original value	Proceeds from sales	Quantity
Air support equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Communications equipment									
UHF equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
VHF equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
HF equipment	6 050	6 050	21	-	-	-	6 050	6 050	21
Antenna	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Satellite equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Telephone equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other communications equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	**6 050**	**6 050**	**21**	-	-	-	**6 050**	**6 050**	**21**
Electronic data processing equipment									
Desktop computer	4 530	1 245	2	-	-	-	4 530	1 245	2
Laptop computer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Monitor	650	225	2	-	-	-	650	225	2
Printer	1 385	593	1	-	-	-	1 385	593	1
Server	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other EDP equipment	720	294	2	-	-	-	720	294	2
Subtotal	**7 285**	**2 357**	**7**	-	-	-	**7 285**	**2 357**	**7**
Generators	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
General stores and other equipment	**305 873**	**185 043**	-	-	-	-	**305 873**	**185 043**	-
Vehicles									
Minibus	-	-	-	36 000	36 000	3	36 000	36 000	3
Bus, medium	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Forklift	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jeep 4x4	-	-	-	110 285	110 285	7	110 285	110 285	7
Panel van	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pickup, double cabin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pickup, single cabin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ambulance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sedan, light	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sedan, medium	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trailer, fuel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trailer, water	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Truck, cargo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Truck, cargo w/crane	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Truck, recovery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spares and other equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	-	-	-	**146 285**	**146 285**	**10**	**146 285**	**146 285**	**10**
Total	**319 208**	**193 450**	**28**	**146 285**	**146 285**	**10**	**465 493**	**339 735**	**38**

E. Donated assets

(United States dollars)

Equipment category	Demining project			Government of Mozambique			WHO			Total		
	Original value	Depreciated value	Quantity	Original value	Depreciated value	Quantity	Original value	Depreciated value	Quantity	Original value	Depreciated value	Quantity
Air support equipment	-	-	-	**40 996**	**40 996**	**4**	-	-	-	**40 996**	**40 996**	**4**
Communications equipment												
UHF equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
VHF equipment	81 277	56 180	101	-	-	-	-	-	-	81 277	56 180	101
HF equipment	99 330	83 089	32	-	-	-	-	-	-	99 330	83 089	32
Antenna	30 469	24 150	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	30 469	24 150	10
Satellite equipment	73 600	64 585	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	73 600	64 585	28
Telephone equipment	4889	3035	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4889	3035	1
Other communications equipment	-	-	-	45 507	34 546	36	-	-	-	45 507	34 546	36
Subtotal	**289 565**	**231 039**	**172**	**45 507**	**34 546**	**36**	-	-	-	**335 072**	**265 585**	**208**
Electronic data-processing equipment												
Desktop computer	14 100	6 643	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	14 100	6 643	11
Laptop computer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Monitor	3 575	1 727	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	3 575	1 727	11
Printer	6 376	3 097	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	6 376	3 097	11
Server	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other EDP equipment	4 424	2 519	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	4 424	2 519	17
Subtotal	**28 475**	**13 986**	**50**	-	-	-	-	-	-	**28 475**	**13 986**	**50**
Generators	**5 114**	**4 437**	**2**	-	-	-	-	-	-	**5 114**	**4 437**	**2**
General stores and other equipment	**1 022 425**	**836 241**	-	**263 690**	**206 139**	-	**31 187**	**27 658**	-	**1 317 302**	**1 069 438**	-
Vehicles												
Minibus	41 509	27 251	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	41 509	27 251	4
Bus, medium	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Forklift	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jeep 4x4	413 995	286 971	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	413 995	286 971	20
Panel van	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pickup, double cabin	304 344	222 593	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	304 344	222 593	27
Pickup, single cabin	66 939	48 588	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	66 939	48 588	3
Ambulance	63 626	54 295	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	63 626	54 295	4
Sedan, light	17 285	11 348	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	17 285	11 348	2
Sedan, medium	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trailer, fuel	20 708	20 708	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	20 708	20 708	9
Trailer, water	41 084	30 220	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	41 084	30 220	20
Truck, cargo	632 271	604 410	96	-	-	-	-	-	-	632 271	604 410	96
Truck, cargo w/crane	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Truck, recovery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spares and other equipment	20 348	20 348	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20 348	20 348	-
Subtotal	**1 622 109**	**1 326 732**	**185**	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1 622 109**	**1 326 732**	**185**
Total	**2 967 688**	**2 412 435**	**409**	**350 193**	**281 681**	**40**	**31 187**	**27 658**	-	**3 349 068**	**2 721 174**	**449**

F. Written-off assets

(United States dollars)

Equipment category	Normal wear and tear			Theft			Accident			Total		
	Original value	Depreciated value	Quantity	Original value	Depreciated value	Quantity	Original value	Depreciated value	Quantity	Original value	Depreciated value	Quantity
Air support equipment	**116 690**	**51 185**	**5**	-	-	-	-	-	-	**116 690**	**51 185**	**5**
Communications equipment												
UHF equipment	980	574	2	1 293	955	1	-	-	-	2 273	1 529	3
VHF equipment	12 120	8 396	19	14 387	11 845	16	-	-	-	26 507	20 241	35
HF equipment	-	-	-	4 425	3 430	1	-	-	-	4 425	3 430	1
Antenna	10 205	7 163	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	10 205	7 163	3
Satellite equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Telephone equipment	1 200	1 060	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 200	1 060	1
Other communications equipment	740	549	16	978	750	1	-	-	-	1 718	1 299	17
Subtotal	**25 245**	**17 742**	**41**	**21 083**	**16 980**	**19**	-	-	-	**46 328**	**34 722**	**60**
Electronic data processing equipment												
Desktop computer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Laptop computer	-	-	-	21 319	15 055	9	10 077	5 352	4	31 396	20 407	13
Monitor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Printer	-	-	-	1 124	532	1	7 847	5 885	5	8 971	6 417	6
Server	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other EDP equipment	-	-	-	1 144	341	3	5 920	4 428	23	7 064	4 769	26
Subtotal	-	-	-	**23 587**	**15 928**	**13**	**23 844**	**15 665**	**32**	**47 431**	**31 593**	**45**
Generators	**2 056**	**1 906**	**1**	5 131	3 593	5	-	-	-	**7 187**	**5 399**	**6**
General stores and other equipment	**26 901**	**11 935**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**26 901**	**11 935**	-
Vehicles												
Minibus	-	-	-	91 609	75 316	9	134 906	110 947	13	226 515	186 263	22
Bus, medium	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Forklift	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jeep 4x4	-	-	-	133 072	101 553	8	755 709	605 444	57	888 781	706 997	65
Panel van	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pickup, double cabin	-	-	-	8 377	8 289	1	289 024	249 275	34	297 401	257 564	35
Pickup, single cabin	-	-	-	25 148	17 888	2	26 153	23 977	2	51 301	41 865	4
Ambulance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sedan, light	-	-	-	25 928	20 636	3	17 285	13 510	2	43 213	34 146	5
Sedan, medium	-	-	-	-	-	-	20 596	12 885	1	20 596	12 885	1
Trailer, fuel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trailer, water	-	-	-	-	-	-	6 132	4 951	3	6 132	4 951	3
Truck, cargo	-	-	-	-	-	-	31 172	29 224	1	31 172	29 224	1
Truck, cargo w/crane	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Truck, recovery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spares and other equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	-	-	-	**284 134**	**223 682**	**23**	**1 280 977**	**1 050 213**	**113**	**1 565 111**	**1 273 895**	**136**
Total	**170 892**	**82 669**	**47**	**333 935**	**260 183**	**60**	**1 304 921**	**1 065 878**	**145**	**1 809 648**	**1 408 730**	**252**

Annex II

Distribution of ONUMOZ assets by disposal action and equipment category

Figure 1. Distribution of ONUMOZ assets by disposal action

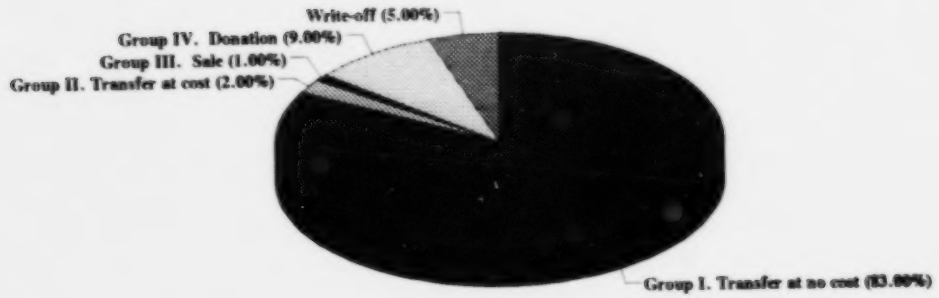
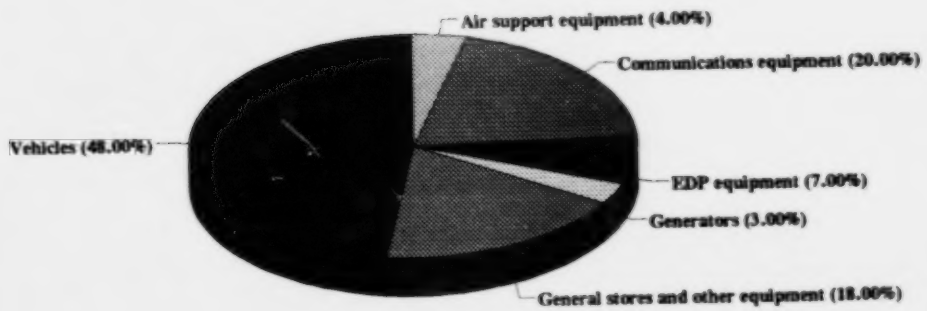


Figure 2. Distribution of ONUMOZ assets by equipment category



UNITED NATIONS

A S

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/52/681
S/1997/892
14 November 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-second session
Agenda item 61
QUESTION OF CYPRUS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Letter dated 13 November 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 10 November 1997, addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Aytuğ Plümer, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hüseyin E. ÇELEM
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Letter dated 10 November 1997 from Mr. Aytuğ Plümer addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to the statements made by the Greek Cypriot representative at the meetings of the Third Committee held on 27 October and 4 November 1997 under agenda items 103, 104 and 107 (entitled "Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice", "International Drug Control" and "Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions", respectively). These statements contain allegations that grossly distort the realities of Cyprus and demonstrate yet again that the Greek Cypriot side is more interested in political posturing than the negotiated settlement of the Cyprus dispute. Since the Turkish Cypriot side is being denied its right of say in the said Committee, I am compelled to respond to these allegations in writing.

The Greek Cypriot representative, in a vain attempt to absolve the Greek Cypriot side from the responsibility of creating and perpetuating the conflict on the island, once again refers to Northern Cyprus, the homeland of the Turkish Cypriot people, as an area under "occupation" or "invasion". I wish to remind the Greek Cypriot representative that the only occupation in Cyprus is the 34-year-old usurpation and continued occupation by the Greek Cypriot side of the seat of government of the bi-communal Republic of Cyprus established under the 1960 treaties.

Much to the contrary of the charges contained in the aforesaid statements by the Greek Cypriot representative, the Cyprus question has not come about as a result of the legitimate Turkish intervention of 1974, but by the Greek Cypriot conspiracy and overt acts of violence during the period from 1963 to 1974 aimed at converting the bi-communal partnership State of Cyprus into a Greek Cypriot one. This is admitted by the Greek Cypriot leader, Mr. Glafcos Clerides, in his memoirs entitled Cyprus: My Deposition, in the following words: "... the Greek Cypriot preoccupation was that Cyprus should be a Greek Cypriot State, with a protected Turkish Cypriot minority" (vol. 3, p. 105).

As regards the question of displaced persons, it should be mentioned that nearly four fifths of the Turkish Cypriot population have been rendered refugees or have become displaced persons since 1963, some of them several times over, as a result of the Greek Cypriot side's attempts to annex Cyprus to Greece. It should be recalled that the issue of displaced persons was fundamentally settled between the two sides through the third Vienna agreement of 2 August 1975, whereby the two sides formally agreed to exchange populations. The agreement was implemented under the supervision of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus in September 1975, paving the way for bi-zonal, bi-communal settlement of the Cyprus issue. (See S/11789 of 5 August 1975 and S/11789/Add.1 of 10 September 1975.)

A natural consequence of the population exchange agreement has been the establishment of parameters within which reciprocal property claims by both sides can be settled, as outlined in the United Nations set of ideas of 1992 in

which a global solution to this issue is envisaged through property exchange and/or compensation. The exploitation of this issue by the Greek Cypriot side for propaganda purposes is clearly aimed at prejudicing a bi-zonal settlement, which has been universally accepted as a fair and realistic approach. Its attempt, on the other hand, to impute responsibility to Turkey on this matter by citing a short-sighted, politically inclined court decision, which fails to take into account the bi-zonal, bi-communal framework for a solution, has similar ulterior motives. By way of emphasis, it should be reiterated that Turkey's role in Cyprus is limited to providing security guarantees to the Turkish Cypriots and preventing the repetition of Greek Cypriot aggression against them.

It is unfortunate that the Greek Cypriot side should continue to resort to such harmful propaganda in order to mislead the international community about the Cyprus question in general, as well as the various issues pertaining to it. This can only be interpreted as another demonstration of the Greek Cypriot side's insincerity about a bi-zonal settlement and of its strategy of buying time until it secures unilateral European Union membership in the name of "Cyprus", in complete disregard of international treaties on Cyprus and the established parameters for a comprehensive settlement.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aytuğ Plümer
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

UNITED NATIONS

A S

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/52/682
S/1997/894
14 November 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-second session
Agenda item 43

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

Report of the Secretary-General

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 51/195 B of 17 December 1996, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its fifty-second session on the progress made in the implementation of that resolution. In the same resolution, the Assembly had also requested the Secretary-General to report to it every three months on the progress of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA). Three progress reports were submitted: the first on 16 March 1997 (A/51/838-S/1997/240 and Corr.1), the second on 16 June 1997 (A/51/929-S/1997/482) and the third on 17 September 1997 (A/52/358-S/1997/719).

2. The present report is also intended to fulfil the request of the Security Council, in resolution 1076 (1996) of 22 October 1996, to be kept regularly informed of the main developments in Afghanistan. The report describes the main events which have taken place in Afghanistan since the adoption of resolution 51/195 B, including the major military and political developments and the activities of the Special Mission. It also draws attention to activities in New York, including the appointment of a Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and the convening of the third meeting of countries with influence in Afghanistan.

3. In October 1997, Norbert Heinrich Holl, Head of UNSMA, expressed to me his intention to resign at the end of 1997, when his contract expires. I accepted his resignation with deep regret. I should like to express my gratitude to Mr. Holl, who has worked devotedly since July 1996 under extremely difficult circumstances and during a period of great upheaval in Afghanistan to promote national reconciliation and a durable political settlement in that country.

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II. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN AFGHANISTAN

A. Military situation

4. The military balance between the Afghan warring factions see-sawed wildly in 1997. The factions fought hard for control of northern Afghanistan and the northern approaches to Kabul. However, despite the expenditure of large quantities of externally supplied ammunition and equipment, and the loss of many lives and the displacement of civilian populations, neither side succeeded in recording sizeable gains of territory or significant political advantage. By early November 1997, the predominantly Pushtun Taliban continued to hold approximately two thirds of the country but had not been able to capture the territories in the north, which are largely populated by the Tajik, Uzbek and Hazara ethnic groups.

5. The Afghan antagonists were the Taliban and the five-party Northern Alliance which is formally known as the Islamic and National Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan. The Taliban continued to control most provinces in the south, south-west and south-east, including Kabul and the cities of Kandahar, Herat and Jalalabad. The Northern Alliance, which operated from the provincial capitals of Mazar-i-Sharif, Bamyan, Taloqan and Maimana, was in control of the provinces in northern and central Afghanistan. The Alliance at present comprises the Jamiat-i-Islami, led by Burhanuddin Rabbani and his chief military commander, Ahmad Shah Massoud; the Hezb-i-Wahdat led by Karim Khalili; the National Islamic Front of Afghanistan (NIMA), led by General Rashid Dostum and General Abdul Malik; the Harakat-i-Islami, led by Sheik Asef Mohseini; and the breakaway faction of the Hezb-i-Wahdat, led by Mohammed Akbari.

6. In January 1997, the Taliban launched a large-scale offensive against the Northern Alliance, sweeping through most of the positions held to the north of Kabul by the Alliance. The strategic positions which fell to the Taliban included Bagram airbase and Charikar, the provincial capital of Parwan, as well as Jabal-os-Saraj and Gulbahar. The Taliban also advanced along the Ghorband valley towards the central province of Bamyan and, on 2 February, occupied Sheik Ali in Parwan province, 20 kilometres east of Shebar pass which commands access to Bamyan and to the northern territories controlled by General Dostum.

7. The Northern Alliance was dealt a further blow on 19 May when General Malik, a key NIMA commander, staged what at the time appeared to be a pro-Taliban revolt against General Dostum. General Malik took control of Mazar-i-Sharif on 24 May, forcing General Dostum to flee the country and take refuge in Turkey. Seizing the opportunity, the Taliban forces, estimated at between 5,000 and 10,000, infiltrated areas north of the Hindu Kush for the first time. Some 3,000 troops proceeded to Mazar, and others went to Kunduz and Takhar provinces. A Taliban delegation, led by Mullah Mohammad Ghaus, flew into Mazar-i-Sharif on 27 May for talks with General Malik.

8. The situation changed on 27 May when General Malik, apparently alarmed by the Taliban's rush to disarm his troops and those of the Hezb-i-Wahdat, decided to change sides again and to attack the Taliban forces. The Taliban forces, outnumbered and outgunned in a place far from their own sphere of influence, withdrew from Mazar on 28 May after suffering serious losses. Capitalizing on

the Taliban's setback, Commander Massoud broke out of the Panjsher valley and cut off the northern side of the Salang tunnel on 28 May. The Massoud forces retook Gulbahar and Jabal-os-Sijaji, located at the southern end of the Salang pass, effectively trapping an estimated 2,000 Taliban forces north of the Hindu Kush. In July, Massoud's forces recaptured Charikar and Bagram airbase, north of Kabul. The forces eventually reached to within 20 to 25 kilometres north of Kabul, putting the capital within range of artillery and rocket fire for the first time since the autumn of 1996. During the fighting in July and August, Kabul came under fire frequently from rocket, artillery and aerial bombing attacks which killed and injured a number of civilians.

9. Severe fighting broke out again in September when the Taliban, supported by defections of local Pushtun commanders, renewed their attempt to take Mazar-i-Sharif. However, like their first attempt in May, the Taliban's initial gains were wiped out by counter-attacks and defections from the Taliban side. Both military and civilian casualties were high, with an estimated 2,000 Taliban troops either killed or captured since May. In the fighting east of Mazar, both sides overran a refugee camp of some 7,000 displaced Tajik nationals, causing several deaths and injuries and creating a situation of near panic among the refugees. Fighting continued for control of the northern city of Kunduz, which has been in the hands of the Taliban or pro-Taliban independent commanders since May 1997.

10. In the central region, sporadic fighting continued between the Taliban and Hezb-i-Wahdat faction. Taliban aircraft attacked Bamyan several times in July and August. In this connection, I should like to draw the special attention of the international community to the fact that the continued fighting in Afghanistan has had devastating effects not only on its people but also on its vast reservoir of rich cultural heritage. A case in point was the recent incident in which a bomb blast near the larger of the two great Buddha statues in Bamyan caused some damage to the head of the statue.

11. In the west, fighting occurred in the Morghab river area in Badghis province but with little change in frontline positions. The Herat, Kandahar and Jalalabad regions were generally calm.

B. Political situation

12. As the fighting continued, the political situation in Afghanistan remained deadlocked. The deepening division of the country along ethnic lines, reinforced by external military and political support, continued to inhibit efforts to engender political dialogue among the factions. Throughout 1997, neither the Taliban nor its rivals appear to have given serious consideration to a political, as opposed to a military, solution to the conflict.

13. An unsettled leadership problem within the Northern Alliance also affected the political environment. Infighting was most pronounced in the predominantly Uzbek Jumbish movement, whose leader, General Dostum, was forced into exile in Turkey for four months by his rival, General Malik, after the latter's short-lived defection to the Taliban in May. While General Malik subsequently turned against the Taliban and helped to drive its forces out of Mazar, the return of

General Dostum to Afghanistan on 12 September led to further political uncertainty in the north. Adding to the complex leadership problem was the death of newly designated Prime Minister Abdul Rahim Ghafoorzai in an aircraft accident at Bamyan airport in August.

14. The humanitarian and political activities of the United Nations in the Mazar-i-Sharif area were seriously disrupted by the renewed fighting and subsequent chaos, including explicit threats to United Nations personnel and the repeated looting of United Nations offices and equipment. At one point, some Afghan officials in Mazar falsely accused United Nations personnel of collaborating with the Taliban in directing its aerial attacks on the city and threatened them with retribution. Looted (and repainted) United Nations vehicles are brazenly used by local factions. I am extremely concerned by all of this, as well as by the refusal of General Malik to allow the International Committee of the Red Cross to visit the Taliban prisoners captured in May, a state of affairs that, as he has been informed on many occasions, is completely unacceptable to the United Nations and the international community at large.

15. Of similar concern is the Taliban's refusal to start negotiations with the Northern Alliance as a whole without preconditions, as well as its social and administrative practices. The mistreatment of girls and women, such as the denial of their rights to employment, health care and education, is especially worrying. Furthermore, Afghanistan has become the world's largest producer of heroin, with the vast majority of the poppies used for that purpose cultivated in areas controlled by the Taliban. The United Nations International Drug Control Programme recently announced that the Taliban had agreed to work out ways and means to eliminate poppy cultivation. I sincerely hope that the Taliban will ensure that the agreement is implemented faithfully and effectively.

16. The Taliban have made new efforts during 1997 to gain international recognition and support. Taliban representatives undertook a series of missions abroad, in particular to East Asia, the Gulf region and the United States of America. While the Governments of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates recognized the Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan in May, other Governments have withheld their decision to extend de jure recognition.

17. Member States, in particular the countries surrounding Afghanistan, continue to express concern and frustration about the continuing civil war. Of particular concern to them are the negative implications of prolonged warfare and the imposition of an ultra-orthodox Islamic State on their borders. Meetings of the Foreign Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Turkey were held in the Islamic Republic of Iran in early January, followed by a meeting of the Afghan parties on 25 and 26 January. The Taliban, however, refused to attend the meeting in Tehran. The Defence Ministers of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan met in Tashkent on 24 and 25 February and reaffirmed their commitment jointly to defend their borders. The Governments of Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran made efforts throughout the year to promote a negotiated settlement to the conflict through an intra-Afghan dialogue. None of those efforts, however, was

successful in getting talks started, in large part because the two countries were not seen by one or the other of the Afghan factions as impartial mediators.

18. Foreign military support to the two sides continued unabated throughout 1997. Reliable eyewitnesses reported many sorties of military deliveries in unmarked aircraft to bases of the Northern Alliance, as well as numerous deliveries by truck caravans of arms, ammunition and fuel to Taliban-controlled territory. United Nations employees also reported an encounter with an unidentified foreign military training unit of several hundred persons near Kabul. Such blatant violations of General Assembly and Security Council resolutions which call for a halt to foreign military intervention seriously undermine United Nations peacemaking efforts and serve to prolong the Afghan conflict. They also raised suspicions and worsened relations among the countries in the region.

III. ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIAL MISSION

19. Despite the unfavourable climate for negotiations during most of 1997, UNSMA has persisted in its peacemaking efforts. From 13 to 15 January, the Head of UNSMA convened an intra-Afghan working group in Islamabad by inviting representatives of the Taliban and the Northern Alliance to participate. The group discussed the modalities for establishing a ceasefire, an exchange of prisoners and steps towards a more durable peace. The working group met again in Islamabad, from 24 to 26 February, to exchange views in greater depth on those subjects and to review more detailed proposals for confidence-building measures and a draft ceasefire agreement. The participants agreed to refer those issues for decision at a higher level meeting. However, owing to the posing of numerous preconditions, the faction leaders were unable to reach agreement on a formula for holding direct talks.

20. Despite the setback to this initiative, UNSMA continued to maintain contact with all of the Afghan factions and to press them once again to define their terms for negotiation. By early May, however, fighting had escalated once more in central and western Afghanistan, spreading to the Northern Alliance stronghold of Mazar-i-Sharif. The Mission continued to exploit new opportunities for negotiation during relative lulls in the fighting in June and early July. Following the capture of several high-ranking Taliban officials and a large number of troops in northern Afghanistan in late May, the Head of UNSMA again initiated efforts to convene a meeting at a neutral site outside Afghanistan, with a single representative from each of the two opposing groups. Taliban representatives, however, refused to agree to any talks until their leaders and all of their prisoners were released, a condition unacceptable to the Northern Alliance which set its own precondition, the demilitarization of Kabul.

21. While both sides agreed in principle on the necessity of a negotiated settlement, neither would agree to unconditional talks. The two sides also continued the familiar practice of accusing each other of receiving military support from foreign countries, while categorically denying their own responsibilities for accepting external support. During a second round of meetings with the Head of UNSMA, the Northern Alliance dropped its insistence on

the prior demilitarization of Kabul, but the Taliban refused to drop its insistence on the prior release of its prisoners captured by the Alliance. As military operations escalated in the northern region during September and October, it was once again clear that both sides preferred to pursue an elusive military "victory" over their adversaries.

22. Throughout 1997, UNSMA remained in close touch with officials and diplomats in Islamabad, notably the envoys of the group of 21 countries with influence in Afghanistan and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. The Head of UNSMA also travelled within the region and beyond to exchange views with a wide range of governmental officials and other parties interested in Afghanistan. From 21 to 26 January, he held consultations on the Afghan situation in Tashkent, Ashkabad and Tehran with the Presidents of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan and with Iranian leaders. He held further talks from 18 to 27 June with officials in Tashkent, Moscow, Washington, D.C., Paris, Bonn and Rome. In Rome, he also consulted former King Zahir Shah and his aides. In meetings with Pakistani officials in Islamabad, the Head of UNSMA stressed that national reconciliation and a durable political settlement could only be achieved with the support and cooperation of the neighbouring States and the major powers.

23. Peace in Afghanistan, if it is to be a durable peace, must also be founded on the alleviation of the Afghan people's most pressing social and economic problems. It is for this reason that the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, is currently formulating a strategic framework for Afghanistan, an initiative which is referred in the report of the Secretary-General on emergency assistance to Afghanistan (A/52/536). The strategic framework for Afghanistan proposes a more holistic approach by the international community, whereby the political efforts of the United Nations inform, and are informed by, the international community's social, economic and humanitarian priorities. In this connection, I look forward to a greater degree of integration of the activities of UNSMA and the other United Nations agencies and programmes working for the Afghan people.

IV. ACTIVITIES AT THE UNITED NATIONS

A. Appointment of the Special Envoy

24. In July 1997, I decided to appoint Lakhdar Brahimi, former Foreign Minister of Algeria, as my Special Envoy for Afghanistan. The activities of the Special Envoy were to be distinguished from those of UNSMA, the mandate of which was specifically defined by the General Assembly in resolution 51/195 B. I asked the Special Envoy to conduct a mission to consult the interested and relevant countries and parties, and then to submit to me his findings on their positions, as well as his recommendations, as part of a comprehensive review of United Nations peacemaking activities in Afghanistan.

25. In New York, the Special Envoy met a number of permanent representatives to the United Nations, as well as representatives of various Afghan parties who were present. In early August, he visited Washington for extensive talks with senior officials of the State Department of the United States of America and the diplomats of various countries stationed in that city.

26. From 14 August to 23 September, the Special Envoy undertook a 13-nation tour of Afghanistan, France, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Japan, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uzbekistan

27. The Special Envoy visited three Afghan cities: Kandahar, Mazar-i-Sharif and Bamyan. In Kandahar, he met Mullah Jalil, Acting Taliban Foreign Minister; Mullah Mohammand Hassan, Deputy Head of the Taliban Supreme Shura in Kabul; and Mullah Mohammand Hassan, Governor of Kandahar. In Mazar-i-Sharif, he met General Abdul Malik, leader of NIMA; Abdul Rahim Ghafoorzai, the newly appointed Prime Minister of the Northern Alliance; and representatives of the Jamiat-i-Islami, the Harakat-i-Islami, and the breakaway faction of the Hezb-i-Wahdat, led by Mr. Akbari. The Head of UNSMA, accompanied the Special Envoy to all of the meetings held in Afghanistan.

28. In Afghanistan and elsewhere, the Special Envoy was received with interest and warm hospitality. In all five of the six immediate neighbours of Afghanistan that he visited, he was received by their respective Heads of State as well as the Foreign Ministers. In the Russian Federation, the Special Envoy met Deputy Foreign Minister Victor Posuvaluk and other senior officials. He was received in Saudi Arabia by King Fahd, Crown Prince Abdullah and Foreign Minister Prince Saud al Faisal, as well as by the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. In India, he was received by Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral, Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Salim I. Shervani and other senior officials. In Japan, he was received by Foreign Minister Keizo Obuchi. The Special Envoy met senior officials of the British and French Foreign Ministries in London and Paris, and he was received by former King Zahir Shah in Rome.

29. After his return to New York on 23 September, the Special Envoy continued consultations with representatives of the Afghan parties and the countries concerned, including the Foreign Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, who were participating in the general debate of the General Assembly. On 30 September, he briefed the Security Council on his mission.

B. Meeting of States with influence in Afghanistan

30. On 1 October, I convened the third meeting of Member States with influence in Afghanistan in New York, using the formula that had been adopted for the meetings held on 18 November 1996 and 16 April 1997. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs chaired the meeting, in which the following member States participated: China, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Netherlands, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uzbekistan. The Organization of the Islamic Conference also participated in the meeting. The Special Envoy and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme briefed the meeting on their respective missions.

31. The delegations shared the view that the situation in Afghanistan remained volatile and carried serious implications for regional peace and stability. Many of them emphasized the importance of persistent efforts by the international community to achieve a political settlement which, they insisted, should not be given up just because conditions were difficult. The delegations expressed the belief that there could be no solution based on the dominance of any one ethnic group, and that there was a need for a broad-based government in Afghanistan that reflected the views of all segments of society. All delegations expressed full support for United Nations efforts in Afghanistan, in particular the peacemaking activities led by UNSMA. They were of the view that the United Nations should play the central role in peacemaking in Afghanistan, as a neutral and impartial mediator.

32. Many delegations stressed the need for more cooperation and coordination among Member States, in particular those in the region, in facilitating peacemaking efforts in Afghanistan. There was widespread agreement on the importance of addressing the question of foreign interference, especially the seemingly unabated supply of arms to the factions, as one of the key factors contributing to the continued fighting in Afghanistan.

33. The delegations emphasized that the Afghans needed to demonstrate a genuine political will to move towards national reconciliation. A number of suggestions were made in support of a direct dialogue between the warring parties. Several delegations offered specific venues for an intra-Afghan dialogue or for an international conference, including Bishkek and Tokyo.

34. Great concern was expressed by delegations about Afghanistan's contribution to the international drug trade and the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, not least the heavy burden placed upon neighbouring countries by the influx of refugees. Special attention was drawn to the serious human rights violations, in particular the treatment of girls and women. Many delegations spoke of the appalling cost of landmines in terms of human suffering and of the need to do more to clear them. There was a keen awareness among delegations of the need for the international community to be ready to help rebuild Afghanistan as soon as conditions permit. It was considered that United Nations peacemaking activities should be closely coordinated with its humanitarian relief and reconstruction activities.

35. Following the meeting, the Special Envoy and the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs convened a series of informal, small gatherings in New York involving representatives of the immediate neighbours of Afghanistan and other countries concerned. To date, there have been three meetings of a group of eight countries, comprising China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, the United States of America and Uzbekistan. The purpose was to provide those countries with an opportunity to meet in small groups for a frank exchange of views on the external aspects of the Afghan question. The representatives discussed ways to bring the warring parties to the negotiating table and to curb the flow of arms into Afghanistan effectively and fairly.

V. OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

36. Afghanistan, which was once a flashpoint of super-Power rivalry, has since become a typical post-cold war regional and ethnic conflict, where the major Powers no longer see a strategic incentive to get involved. It has also become a place where even responsible local political authorities, let alone a central government, have virtually ceased to exist. Herein lies much of the explanation why repeated international attempts to bring peace to the country have not borne fruit.

37. Since the early 1990s, the Afghan factions and warlords have failed to show the will to rise above their narrow factional interests and to start working together for national reconciliation. The United Nations successfully mediated the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan in the late 1980s. But, although the Najibullah regime was ready to hand over power to a broad-based transition mechanism, the Mujahideen parties were unable to agree among themselves on how to form such a mechanism. Their disagreements escalated to the point where Kabul was plunged into chaos and bloodshed once the Najibullah regime collapsed in April 1992. Since that time, the situation has only become worse.

38. Even today, the Afghan parties seem determined to go on fighting, while outside Powers continue to provide material, financial and other support to their respective clients inside Afghanistan. Meanwhile, although those major Powers that have potential influence in Afghanistan have recently started to show interest, they have yet to demonstrate the necessary degree of determination to move the situation forward.

39. In these circumstances, it is illusory to think that peace can be achieved. How can peace be imposed on faction leaders who are determined to fight it out to the finish and who receive seemingly unlimited supplies of arms from outside sponsors? It is this continued support from some outside Powers - combined with the apathy of the others who are not directly involved - which has strengthened the belief among the warlords and parties in Afghanistan that they can achieve their political, religious and social goals by force.

Responsibility of the Afghans

40. The Afghans, perhaps, understandably, are reluctant to accept responsibility for the repeated failures to put an end to their conflict. Nevertheless, the Afghan people cannot just simply shift all responsibilities for the tragedy that has befallen their country onto others. Even if they receive help from outside, it is the Afghans themselves who are fighting one another. Peace will become possible when - and only when - they truly desire it and start to work seriously for it.

41. Much to my regret, the Afghan factions have so far failed to prove that they are willing to lay down their arms and cooperate with the United Nations for peace. To be sure, every side proclaims its readiness to work with the United Nations and accuses the other party or parties of bearing alone the responsibility for the continued fighting. However, at any given time there has always been at least one party that has thought it could achieve military

victory over its opponents and that, consequently, has rebuffed efforts to negotiate a ceasefire and only shown a willingness to compromise once the military situation has been reversed and it feels under threat. At the same time, there always exist spoilers inside and outside the country who are much better off with the continuation of the problem than they would be with the solution, a classic situation in failed States where warlords, smugglers, terrorists, drug dealers and others thrive amid the conflict and would only lose out with the return of peace, law and order.

Foreign interference

42. A similar situation prevails with the main foreign providers of support to the Afghan warring parties. They all enthusiastically proclaim their support to the United Nations peacemaking efforts but at the same time continue to fan the conflict by pouring in arms, money and other supplies to their preferred Afghan factions. These countries unanimously denounce "foreign interference", but are quick to add that arms are delivered only to "the other side".

43. These external players may have their own reasons for continuing to support their respective Afghan clients, but they must be held responsible for exacerbating the bloody conflict in Afghanistan. They must also be held accountable for building a fire which, they should be aware, is unlikely to remain indefinitely confined to Afghanistan. Indeed, that fire is already spreading beyond the borders of Afghanistan, posing a serious threat to the region and beyond in the shape of terrorism, banditry, narcotics trafficking, refugee flows, and increasing ethnic and sectarian tension.

44. The supply of arms and other materials from outside provides the essential wherewithal for the continued fighting in Afghanistan. It is apparent, in the light of the evidence collected so far, that large quantities of war-making materials are entering Afghanistan. It is hard to accept the argument that the Afghan warring factions are able to sustain the current level of fighting using only "those weapons and ammunition left by the Soviet troops". Neither is it credible that, with their limited financial capacity, those Afghan factions could afford to procure massive amounts of weapons on the black market and smuggle them into Afghanistan on their own.

International framework for settlement of the conflict

45. The unabated supply of arms, and the divergence of ways in which the countries concerned seem to be dealing with the conflict, lead me to believe that a solid international framework must be established in order to address the external aspects of the Afghan question. Such a framework would provide the neighbours of Afghanistan and other countries with an opportunity to discuss the question of foreign interference in a coherent manner. The main objective would be to debate how those countries could help the United Nations bring the Afghan parties to the negotiating table, including effective and fair ways to curb the flow of arms and other war-making materials into Afghanistan. Such countries should also find a way to speak unanimously by coordinating their individual peace initiatives through the United Nations. Only in this way would they send a message to the Afghans that the international community meant to achieve peace

in Afghanistan and that the warring factions could no longer count on outside support.

46. One of the ways to curb the flow of arms into Afghanistan would be the imposition of an effective arms embargo. Although such an embargo should not become an end in itself, it is necessary for the United Nations and Member States to undertake preliminary studies on how a mandatory arms embargo could be implemented in a fair and verifiable manner. If the cost estimates for such an embargo proved to be too high, other ways would need to be found to end, or at least significantly reduce, the supply of arms and other materials to the warring factions. One possibility would be for the countries concerned to take voluntary, unilateral but concerted actions by themselves to stop, to the degree possible, the supply of a designated list of goods to Afghanistan. This, of course, would also need to be done in a manner that did not provide advantage to any group.

47. The meetings held in New York of countries with influence in Afghanistan ("the Group of 21"), as well as those of the immediate neighbours and other countries ("the Group of Eight"), are part of my efforts in this direction. With the participation of my Special Envoy, I shall continue to convene informal meetings involving representatives of the neighbours of Afghanistan and other countries with influence in Afghanistan. The composition and the number of such groupings will remain flexible.

48. Furthermore, I am looking forward to attending the OIC summit, which will be held in Tehran from 9 to 11 December. I very much hope that OIC and its members will use this opportunity to adopt unanimously a strong decision in favour of peace in Afghanistan.

Intra-Afghan talks

49. Parallel to this, I intend to maintain through UNSMA and at United Nations Headquarters close contact with the warring parties, as well as with other influential Afghan individuals and organizations, with a view to preparing the ground for an intra-Afghan dialogue. Such a dialogue, if realized, should focus at first on a ceasefire, to be followed by political negotiations leading to the establishment of a broad-based representative government. It goes without saying that, for such a government to be acceptable, it should reflect the interests of all the major social, political and religious segments of the country. I take note in this context that several Member States have offered to host such a dialogue.

50. It is hoped that a ceasefire and the beginning of a dialogue - or even the mere prospects for one - would serve to create its own momentum and, after some time, make it difficult for anyone to resume fighting. It is also hoped that the ceasefire and talks would give a boost to the efforts of some Afghan groups and individuals to mobilize Afghan public opinion in favour of peace.

Activities of UNSMA

51. UNSMA will continue to play the primary role in conducting the United Nations peacemaking activities in Afghanistan. I believe that the current structure, composition and strength of UNSMA should be maintained for the time being. This does not exclude the possibility that, should a ceasefire and other measures be agreed, additional personnel might be required. Nor does it prejudge the issue referred to in paragraph 56 below.

52. The Special Mission will maintain its temporary headquarters in Islamabad, until conditions permit it to return to Kabul. Meanwhile, I intend to explore the possible opening of a small office in Turkmenistan in order to enhance the Special Mission's information-gathering and liaison capabilities, especially with those parties for whom the location of the Mission's temporary headquarters in Islamabad presents difficulties.

Conclusions

53. As described in the preceding sections of the present report, a peaceful settlement in Afghanistan remains elusive notwithstanding the untiring efforts of the United Nations to broker peace among the country's warring factions. In the meantime, Afghanistan's civil war has continued to exact a staggering toll in terms of human lives and suffering as well as material destruction. What we are witnessing is a seemingly endless tragedy of epic proportions in which the Afghan people's yearning for peace is being systematically and continually betrayed by leaders and warlords driven by selfish ambitions and thirst for power.

54. In earlier reports I have observed that the Afghan parties and their external supporters, while continuing to pursue military solutions, often also profess support for resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council calling for a peaceful settlement. Regrettably, their actions seldom seem to be motivated, however, by a desire to contribute to the implementation of those resolutions. Similarly, it is discouraging that with few exceptions, the international community as a whole has shown only limited interest in adopting tangible measures to discourage the Afghan parties and their outside supporters from pursuing their bellicose aims and objectives.

55. There is no doubt that a number of Governments both inside and outside the region would be in a favourable position, should they so decide, to encourage the Afghan parties to overcome their differences and seek a peaceful settlement. It is also clear, however, that as long as those Governments choose not to exercise their influence with the parties in a positive and constructive manner, the efforts made by my representatives, however dedicated and skilled, will not suffice to bring peace to Afghanistan. Sadly, it could be argued that in these circumstances the role of the United Nations in Afghanistan is little more than that of an alibi to provide cover for the inaction - or worse - of the international community at large.

56. Over the past several years, it has become increasingly difficult to justify the continuation of United Nations peace efforts and the attendant costs in the absence of any positive signs suggesting a fundamental change of attitude

on the part of those Governments that are capable of contributing decisively to a peaceful solution of the conflict. Recently, I have been somewhat encouraged, however, by the increased level of attention to the situation in Afghanistan now being manifested by a number of countries that have begun to discuss among themselves the adoption of practical measures to persuade the Afghan parties to embark on serious negotiations. But much more needs to be done by Governments with a greater sense of unity in order for the peace efforts spearheaded by the United Nations to stand a realistic chance of success.

57. I shall continue to keep the General Assembly and the Security Council informed about developments relevant to the search for a ceasefire and, ultimately, a negotiated solution in Afghanistan, including any actions taken by Member States with a bearing on the situation, whether positive or negative. In conclusion, I should like to express my special thanks to Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, whose findings and suggestions form the basis for the present report, as well as to Mr. Norbert Holl, the Head of UNSMA, and his staff who continue to carry out their difficult tasks with the highest degree of dedication and professionalism.

UNITED NATIONS **A**

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/52/683
17 November 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifty-second session
Agenda items 40, 72 (b) and 81
COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS
AND THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE
REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
CONCLUDING DOCUMENT OF THE TWELFTH
SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:
REGIONAL CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES
MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Letter dated 13 November 1997 from the Permanent Representatives of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit the text of a joint communiqué of the Presidents of the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Lithuania, adopted at Palanga, Lithuania, on 10 November 1997 (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 40, 72 (b) and 81.

(Signed)

Trivimi VELLISTE
Ambassador,
Permanent Representative
of Estonia to
the United Nations

(Signed)

Janis PRIEDKALNS
Ambassador,
Permanent Representative
of Latvia to
the United Nations

(Signed)

Oskaras JUSYS
Ambassador,
Permanent Representative
of Lithuania to
the United Nations

ANNEX

Joint communiqué issued at Palanga, Lithuania, on 10 November 1997 by the Presidents of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

The Presidents of the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Lithuania met at Palanga, Lithuania, on 10 November 1997 and discussed a number of mutually important issues, paying special attention to integration into the European Union, the finalization and forthcoming signing of the Charter of Partnership among the United States of America, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, relations with the Russian Federation and trilateral Baltic cooperation.

The Presidents discussed the integration of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania into the European Union and welcomed the European Commission's recommendation to start accession negotiations with Estonia. They confirmed the importance of the full-fledged participation of the Baltic States on an equal footing in the process of enlargement of the Union and expressed their conviction as to their countries' readiness to start accession negotiations in early 1998.

At the meeting the Presidents discussed and welcomed the finalization of the Charter of Partnership among the United States of America, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. They recognized that the Charter was of great importance to the dynamic development of their bilateral relations with the United States and to the advancement of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania towards their full integration into European and transatlantic political, economic, security and defence institutions.

The Presidents stated that the security policy of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania was based on the understanding that European security was indivisible and that security and stability would be strengthened by the integration of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania into the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The Presidents of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania welcomed the will of President Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Federation further to expand good-neighbourly relations and mutually beneficial practical cooperation in the broadest range of issues of mutual interest, as well as to continue political dialogue, both bilaterally and within the framework of existing institutions.

The Presidents welcomed the signing of the border delimitation agreement between Lithuania and the Russian Federation and noted that Estonia and Latvia were ready to sign similar agreements.

The Presidents considered the proposal of the Russian Federation to provide unilateral security guarantees to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The Presidents reiterated the shared position that unilateral security guarantees did not correspond to the spirit of the new Europe and that such unilateral guarantees, as well as regional security pacts, had never been on the agenda of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The Presidents discussed various aspects of trilateral Baltic cooperation and noted with satisfaction that pragmatic, result-oriented and constructive development was continuing. They emphasized the importance of the promotion of economic cooperation with the ultimate goal of creating an area of free movement of goods, services, capital and people. In this connection the Presidents welcomed the initialling of the agreement on the abolition of non-tariff barriers in joint trade and encouraged the relevant authorities to conclude agreements on common transit procedures and free trade in services.

The Presidents underlined that the Via Baltica project was of common priority interest and called on the Governments to speed up the implementation of that infrastructure project, which was important to the whole region and to the Baltic States' European integration and to take immediate steps to improve the border crossings between the Baltic States.

The Presidents stressed the significance and need to strengthen further the cooperation in the area of domestic and judicial affairs, which is one of the cornerstones of membership in the European Union.

Lennart MERI President, Republic of Estonia	Guntis ULMANIS President, Republic of Latvia	Algirdas BRAZAUSKAS President, Republic of Lithuania

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UNITED NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/52/684
S/1997/897
17 November 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-second session
Agenda item 61
QUESTION OF CYPRUS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Letter dated 12 November 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government and further to our letter dated 4 November 1997 (A/52/569-S/1997/852), I have the honour to draw your attention to new illegal and unacceptable Turkish actions of serious concern. These actions, more specifically the continuing violations of the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus and the flight information region of Nicosia and the further strengthening of the already excessive military armaments of the Turkish forces illegally occupying Cyprus, are escalating the existing tension in the island, the root cause of which is the invasion and the continuing, for more than 23 years now, Turkish occupation of 37 per cent of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus.

On 3 November, two RF-4 military planes, two CN-235s and one Gulfstream (G-4) violated the Nicosia flight information region and the national airspace of the Republic.

On 4 November, 17 Turkish military planes, of which 12 were F-16s, 2 were RF-4s, 2 were Gulfstreams and 1 was a CN-235, entered the Nicosia flight information region and subsequently violated the national airspace of the Republic. Of the above-mentioned military planes four F-16s, two Gulfstreams and one CN-235 landed at the illegal airport of "Lefkoniko" in the Turkish occupied area of Cyprus.

In addition, according to information received by the Republic of Cyprus, on 16 and 17 October, 12 mobile artillery units (M 110, 203 mm) were brought to the occupied part of Cyprus through the illegal port of Famagusta. It should be noted that this was the first time the Turkish occupation forces were equipped with this type of weaponry.

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As pointed out in our previous letters, these Turkish actions, which are in violation of repeated General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, further aggravate the situation in Cyprus. On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, I wish to protest strongly once again the new violations of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus, which are in complete disregard of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant decisions and resolutions of the Organization on the question of Cyprus. I would request, therefore, that all necessary measures be taken to stop such provocative actions.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Sotos ZACKHEOS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Cyprus
to the United Nations

UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/52/685
17 November 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifty-second session
Agenda items 118 and 119

PATTERN OF CONFERENCES

JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

United Nations publications: enhancing cost-effectiveness in implementing legislative mandates

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to submit to the General Assembly his comments on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) entitled "United Nations publications: enhancing cost-effectiveness in implementing legislative mandates" (JIU/REP/97/2), which is contained in document A/51/946. The JIU report was prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 50/206 C of 23 December 1995.

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ANNEX

Comments of the Secretary-General

INTRODUCTION

1. The comprehensive report entitled "United Nations publications: enhancing cost-effectiveness in implementing legislative mandates" (JIU/REP/97/2), prepared by Inspectors Fatih Bouayad-Agha, Sumihiro Kuyama and Wolfgang Munch, has been received with great interest. It is clear that author departments were extensively consulted in the course of the preparation of the report and in many instances their views are reflected. This valuable assessment by the Inspectors is very welcome, and it is hoped that their recommendations will serve to further rationalize the publications programme of the United Nations.

2. United Nations publications make a unique intellectual contribution to furthering the aims of the Organization. The sheer magnitude of this publishing endeavour is evidenced in the consolidated publications programme for the biennium 1996-1997, which contains 1,627 titles produced by the Secretariat in New York, Geneva, and Vienna and by the regional commissions. Those publications, disseminated by the United Nations to Governments and civil society around the world, are a visible and concrete manifestation of the range of knowledge and expertise available within the Secretariat.

3 Publications are an important means through which the Secretariat implements the mandates given to it by intergovernmental bodies. Departments are expected to review their publications programmes in the context of the reform plan for the Organization. Emphasis should be placed on identifying areas of strength where competencies have been developed; reducing fragmentation of skills and duplication of efforts; raising the quality of analyses and operations; and streamlining and rationalizing delivery capacities. In an important initiative, the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, in which the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the regional commissions and the United Nations Environment Programme participate, has launched a thorough review of all major United Nations economic and social publications.

4. The recently issued report of the Task Force on the Reorientation of United Nations Public Information Activities rightly states that the Organization's very survival depends upon its ability to communicate its message and its activities effectively to an increasingly cost-resistant world. Publications are without question a key tool in building awareness and improving the image of the Organization.

5. It is worthwhile here to recall an earlier JIU report on publications policy and practice in the United Nations system that was issued in 1984. That report reflected an Organization in which new publishing technology was only just beginning to be utilized. Since then, publishing has changed dramatically, both within and outside the Organization. A key element of the Secretary-General's reform plan for the Organization is the enhancement of the ability to move towards creating an "electronic United Nations". Today, the United Nations

has its own acclaimed Internet site, which currently registers over 5 million "hits" each month. The United Nations Treaty Collection on the Internet alone receives more than 100,000 hits monthly. More details of United Nations electronic publishing initiatives appear below under recommendations 2 and 14.

6. Some JIU recommendations from the previous report, such as the request for a more flexible attribution of authorship policy and the call for United Nations publishing to take full advantage of developments in printing technology, have been translated into practice. Other aspects of publications policy covered in the 1984 report are still relevant and are discussed in the current report. These include, among others, the need for a balance between free and sales publications, as well as for a more positive approach to sales; the importance of targeting publications; and the desirability of feedback mechanisms and readership surveys.

7. The budgetary reductions made by departments in 1996 and 1997 resulted in the termination, curtailment and deferral of a number of publications originally proposed in the programme budget for the current biennium. This is a clear indication that departments are indeed reviewing and prioritizing the publications in their programmes. This trend will continue as all entities of the Organization work to maximize their resources at a time of major structural reform. In many parts of the United Nations, progress is already being made in rationalizing publications, eliminating duplication and ensuring that publications are produced in the most cost-effective manner.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Recommendation 1. All United Nations substantive legislative bodies should include, in their respective programme of work, an agenda on publications, and based on the substantive inputs by the Secretariat, should proceed with the following objectives: to review and assess all existing publications programmes in terms of relevance to mandates and usefulness for attaining the objectives of mandates, and to identify possible duplication among existing publications (within the United Nations and between the United Nations and organizations inside and outside the United Nations system) and to come up with appropriate proposals on the consolidation and/or elimination of publications.

8. Comments on this recommendation should be read in conjunction with those made on recommendation 5, which also addresses the subject of mandates.

9. It is understood that the substantive legislative bodies that report to the General Assembly necessarily play an important role in determining both the need for and the general content of publications, as well as in monitoring and evaluating the resulting outputs. In this connection, the Inspectors' observation that the Statistical Commission, the Commission on Population and Development and the Committee on Information could be considered to be relatively well-functioning legislative bodies is a positive one. In addition, the Department of Public Information submits a detailed report on its publications to the Committee on Information at its annual sessions, during which the Committee reviews the work of the Department.

10. Increased interest in publications on the part of intergovernmental bodies, as well as their guidance on some of the broader issues relating to publications prepared under their mandates, would be welcomed. However, it is perhaps not realistic to expect that the views of those bodies taken alone would be the most informed on matters such as sales and marketability, public information and public dissemination questions, and costing and budgeting. With specific regard to publications in the area of technical cooperation, it has been pointed out that efficiency and cost-effectiveness would not be enhanced by subjecting each of such publications to intergovernmental scrutiny.

11. A variety of standardized feedback mechanisms are used by the Organization to determine the worth of its many unique publications. This information is sought through various means such as questionnaires polling sales customers and evaluations and readership surveys prepared by substantive departments. However, as the JIU report points out, readership and marketing surveys in particular are a limited tool. They are labour-intensive in terms of preparation and analysis of results. While electronic surveys may be conducted in future on the Internet in order to reach a wider audience, the Inspectors state that past experience with electronic surveys has been disappointing. But there are other means to gauge how United Nations publications are received and to what extent they are valued. Permission is regularly sought to reprint United Nations publications in whole or in part, as well as to translate and produce them in non-official languages. Several hundred requests for use of United Nations materials are processed by the secretariat of the Publications Board each year from academics, non-governmental organizations, commercial publishers and individuals. Also, unsolicited comments from readers, especially from senior officials, are frequently received.

12. The Inspectors suggest that there might be an overuse of the publications option within the Organization. It should be pointed out that some departments, such as the Department of Peacekeeping Operations or the Department of Public Information, have more flexibility than do others with regard to the means they utilize to fulfil their mandates. It is, however, clear that the publications option is an essential one for most areas of the Secretariat. In the end, it must be left to the departments to consider the options, other than publications, at their disposal for implementing their legislative mandates.

13. It should be emphasized in regard to the Inspectors' concern about producing the same publication in different formats that this is an infrequent practice. The Working Committee of the Publications Board is very sensitive to the need to avoid this type of duplication. In some cases, however, a report is issued for which interest and demand is exceedingly high and perhaps unforeseen. An example is the publication Critical Trends: Global Change and Sustainable Development, which was issued in a second, glossier version with colour charts and graphs. This was done at the specific request of Member States. The report of the International Law Commission is issued quickly for General Assembly consideration and then is incorporated into the Yearbook of the International Law Commission, thereby becoming part of the Commission's permanent record. In this form a greater degree of verification and accuracy is required.

14. The use of more powerful desktop publishing equipment and software in all languages and of digital reproduction techniques has made it possible to

eliminate many of the provisional simplified versions of Official Records that had to be produced in the past in order to meet short processing deadlines. For the first time this year, it has not been necessary to produce the advance versions of the annual report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, of the report of the Security Council and of several other Supplements to the Official Records of the General Assembly. The same resources and a realignment of editorial work have been used successfully to issue the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly during the main part of its fifty-first session in final form, as part of the Official Records, during the first week in April, while in previous years this publication was not available until July or August.

15. It would be difficult to address duplication of publications with organizations outside the United Nations system, as the Inspectors suggest might be possible. In this regard, there is no systematic way to know about forthcoming publications. Also, the question would arise as to who has the authority to propose consolidation and/or elimination of certain publications and give preference to others.

16. The Working Committee of the Publications Board has asked departments to ensure that when additional publications are added to the publications programme they do not duplicate any information currently provided by other agencies and programmes within the system.

> Recommendation 2. In order to enhance the role that publications play in implementing the mandates of intergovernmental bodies and, concurrently, to improve the cost-effectiveness of its publishing activities, the Secretary-General should submit the most updated report on publications policy to the United Nations General Assembly at its fifty-second session. The General Assembly, in turn, should conduct a detailed assessment of existing publications policies and practices, and may wish to propose any necessary modifications, by taking into account the recommendations presented in this report.

17. The JIU report was not received in sufficient time to allow for the drafting of a new publications policy paper for submission to the General Assembly at its current session. It should be pointed out that an in-depth report of the Secretary-General on publications policy (A/C.5/48/10), prepared under the direction of the Publications Board in consultation with all author departments, was circulated for the Assembly's consideration in October 1993. Although it was, unfortunately, never discussed, it was heavily relied upon by the Inspectors in their current recommendations. Some of the contents of that report are outdated as a result of restructuring within the Organization as well as policy changes made during the past four years. Much of it, however, holds true and remains relevant to any discussion of publications policies. The reports of the Publications Board on its activities in 1995 and 1996 can be considered as updates to the earlier policy paper and can be made available to the General Assembly.

18. The JIU report stresses that publications policy has not been taken up by the General Assembly in recent years. This is regrettable, and a fruitful discussion of publications policies and practices in the Assembly would be

welcomed by author departments and by the Publications Board, particularly in view of a number of new initiatives that have been taken, which will be highlighted below. For example, the many administrative instructions relating to publications in the control and limitation of documentation series are being updated by the Publications Board. New instructions, including one on publishing in an electronic format, are also being produced by the Board. A compendium of these new and revised policy directives is being prepared.

19. The Inspectors ask that the electronic environment in particular be taken into account in the establishment of a solid, coherent and innovative publications policy. As previously stated, this is the goal of the Organization, and great strides have been made in this area by all departments. Publishing in electronic formats and dissemination of United Nations materials on electronic networks has been accorded high priority by the Publications Board. Through its Working Group on Electronic Publishing, set up in 1994, the Board has actively responded to system-wide interest in exploiting new technologies to widen the outreach of the Organization. Details on the Organization's many electronic publishing initiatives are provided below under recommendation 14.

> Recommendation 3. The Secretary-General should review the current administrative, managerial and organizational structure of publishing activities and introduce necessary reforms at United Nations Headquarters. These could include the possible consolidation of a number of the existing functions and units into a more centralized structure by taking into account, inter alia, the requirements to streamline and accelerate the publishing process and bring greater integration and coordination.

20. Comments on this recommendation should be read in conjunction with recommendation 10 below.

21. The functions of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, of the Department of Public Information and of the Department of Management in the publishing process do not entail overlap or duplication. The established mechanism for the coordination, scheduling and monitoring of publications includes weekly interdepartmental meetings, which are chaired by the Documents Control Section of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services. During those meetings, production schedules are agreed on, and monitored and adjusted as necessary. Further improvements in production coordination could be made within the context of those meetings.

22. The production process is subject to ongoing refinements. For example, the Treaty Series Group of the Copy Preparation and Proofreading Section was transferred to the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs to allow for greater centralization in producing the Treaty Series. This is a model for the type of structural adjustment that can be made to improve efficiency in the publications process. Also, the Production and Coordination Unit has been placed under the direct supervision of a senior manager in the Publications Service of the Department of Public Information, to enhance control in the publications programme.

23. All departments concerned agree that there is room for improvement. In the context of the reform of the Organization, a review of the current administrative, managerial and organizational structure of publishing activities can be carried out, with a view to introducing any necessary reforms, including possibly a more centralized structure. In this context, the proposal made by the Inspectors on establishing a small central unit that would consolidate a number of existing functions/units could be considered. It should be noted that the examples of coordinating efforts on the part of the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Labour Organization pointed to by JIU, are interesting and practical, but are not easily translatable to the United Nations Secretariat, a far larger and more diverse entity than those mentioned.

> Recommendation 4. The Secretary-General should strengthen the Publications Board by reinforcing its mandates, as well as in terms of its working methods and practices, to ensure that it provides effective overall control, oversight and coordination, in addition to policy guidance.

24. While appreciating the need for policy guidance and oversight within the publications programme of the Secretariat, author departments have reiterated that the purpose of strengthening the Publications Board should be to facilitate rather than control the work. They agree that the suggestion in the report that the Publications Board should screen all publications and even manage the production process is not feasible. The Economic Commission for Europe has characterized increased centralization in general as a recipe for delay and obstruction, particularly in relation to publishing economic surveys.

25. A somewhat broader mandate for the Publications Board was considered in April 1994. It was decided by the Board at that time not to approve it, pending the General Assembly's review of the publications policy report (A/C.5/48/10). It should be pointed out, however, that the proposed new mandate did not in any way suggest the "hands-on" control envisioned by the Inspectors.

26. The Board meets twice a year at the head of department level to discuss and decide on publications policy issues. This composition, with representation at the highest level, went into effect in June 1993. A review of participation in the meetings reveals that the most senior staff members have not, for the most part, been able to attend. If the General Assembly so decides, it might be more workable for the composition to revert to a member from each department, to be designated by the department head.

27. The Working Committee of the Publications Board meets once a month and is composed of representatives from the processing areas - editorial, documents control, distribution, production and coordination, reproduction and design. In addition, representatives from the substantive departments attend when necessary. The Committee is charged with coordinating the planning and supervision of the overall biennial publications programme. In addition to its biennial review of the programme, it discusses a variety of publications-related matters, including additions to the programme, external publishing proposals, requests for reprints, use of external printing funds, electronic initiatives and logo questions.

28. It should be pointed out that, owing to the expansion of electronic publishing, as well as to many other publishing initiatives, the scope of the work of the Publications Board has increased exponentially. To help increase its effectiveness, the Department of Public Information has proposed strengthening the Board's secretariat by appointing a more senior official to work full time as Secretary.

> Recommendation 5 Specific mandates to be provided normally in resolutions/decisions of the intergovernmental bodies should be the primary criterion for planning new publications, and publications based on general mandates should be kept to a minimum.

29. It is rare that legislative bodies give specific mandates for publications, as this is seen to be micro-managing the Secretariat. However, in some cases, specific mandates are given for institutional, recurrent publications, such as the United Nations Yearbook. Also, in the case of the Office of Legal Affairs, the General Assembly has given specific mandates for many of its unique and specialized publications, such as the United Nations Juridical Yearbook and the Summaries of Judgments, Advisory Opinions and Orders of the International Court of Justice.

30. General mandates are an important basis for a large number of publications, specifically in the social and economic sector. The need to prepare the majority of those publications is confirmed through the adoption of biennial programme budgets. In addition, some publications are produced in response to urgent concerns of the United Nations community. The opinion has been expressed that limiting publications to those undertaken in response to specific mandates could be a very restrictive measure rather than a pragmatic solution since most resolutions and mandates are of a general nature.

31. While most of its output can be characterized as public information materials rather than publications, it should be mentioned that the Department of Public Information has a general mandate to raise global awareness of the mission, relevance and work of the Organization. This broad mandate is unique, and it enables the Department to respond rapidly and effectively to changing information priorities. In its report, the Task Force on the Reorientation of United Nations Public Information Activities pointed to the multiplicity of the mandates to which the Department of Public Information is already subject as a serious impediment to an effective communications strategy.

32. All author departments have reiterated the importance they attach to retaining a degree of flexibility in their respective publications programmes. In their view, it is essential that they are afforded the latitude to produce a limited number of ad hoc publications which could not have been foreseen at the time of planning the biennial publications programme.

Recommendation 6. All proposed publications programmes should be screened prior to the preparation of each biennial programme budget, first at the departmental level, and then at the Secretariat level (Publications Board).

33. This recommendation is a reflection of current procedure. The instructions for the preparation of biennial programme budgets also include instructions for the completion of forms required by the Publications Board with respect to the proposed publications of each department or office. All departments and entities within the Secretariat have recently undergone a comprehensive review and assessment of their publications in the context of the preparation of the official publications programme for the biennium 1998-1999. All proposed publications have been subjected to careful screening in the department, and were submitted to the Working Committee of the Publications Board for its review. Financial implications were taken fully into account in this process.

34. While the Publications Board can direct and advise, the substantive departments must take the primary responsibility for their output vis-à-vis substance, cost-effectiveness and relevance to mandates. The Working Committee of the Publications Board is responsible for globally administering the funds in the external printing accounts, and therefore, in its biennial review of publications, it looks carefully at proposed contractual spending. It focuses also on the details related to processing of publications, but in no way does it, nor could it, screen the contents of publications.

Recommendation 7. With a view to exercising, above all, a better budgetary control of the United Nations publishing activities, the Secretary-General should institute as part of the programme budget a new system whereby, starting with the biennium 2000-2001, each department receives a separate but consolidated budgetary line covering publishing activities.

35. At present, provision is made for external printing in each budget section where publications are prepared. The production phases, that is, editing, copy preparation, graphic presentation, internal printing, distribution and the like, appear in sections of the budget that are responsible for those functions within the publications process. The activities have been centralized in the name of cost-effectiveness. Unless they are decentralized to each department, it would be difficult to show a separate but consolidated budgetary line covering publishing activities for each budget section.

Recommendation 8. As a rule, no publication should be produced under the United Nations regular budget unless the publication in question is contained in the budgetary provision mentioned in recommendation 7 and is approved by the General Assembly within the framework of the programme budget.

36. This recommendation reflects current operating procedure. The publications programme of the United Nations, as a rule, reflects the publications proposed in the biennial programme budget. However, here again, author departments have reiterated that it is essential to maintain a degree of flexibility in order to permit an effective response to both external developments and the changing needs of the Organization. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs has emphasized that it is important to make allowance for the fact that a research

programme in support of parliamentary deliberations is likely to result in a publication that may not have been forecast during the formulation of the programme budget. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) has emphasized that since programme-planning rules allow for adding a limited number of outputs/publications by legislation or at the initiative of departments, rules governing publications should be in the same spirit. Also, it is a requirement that whenever a department or other Secretariat entity proposes to add a publication to its programme in any biennium, prior approval must be given by the Working Committee of the Publications Board.

37. It should be noted here that long-term budgetary planning did not foresee the rapid strides made in - and demands made for - Internet publishing, which has left departments with a lack of resources for electronic publishing.

> Recommendation 9. Decisions by substantive legislative bodies requesting new publication(s), subsequent to those approved in the programme budget, should be taken only after the careful review of, among other things, information on the potential for duplication and financial implications, and a time-frame should be incorporated.

38. This recommendation is widely supported by the Secretariat, however its implementation is the responsibility of the Member States. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific reports that it agrees with the concept of applying the "sunset rule", provided of course that the specific publication is no longer a priority issue. The Office of Legal Affairs has noted that some mandates provided by the legislative bodies years ago to meet the needs of a different time may no longer be relevant.

> Recommendation 10. Once the publication(s) or publications programme(s) is (are) approved by the General Assembly, the entire publishing process (writing, editing, translation, production and sales/distribution) should be planned in a more coordinated and integrated manner.

39. The comments on this recommendation should be read in conjunction with those related to recommendation 3 above. Enhanced coordination of the processing of publications, from writing to distribution, could help to improve their timeliness and, accordingly, increase their relevance and demand.

40. In pursuing this objective, however, it must be remembered that the proceedings of intergovernmental organs and bodies make it imperative to research, write, edit, translate, print and distribute parliamentary documentation for meetings on specific dates, and almost always within short deadlines. Fulfilling this requirement as efficiently as possible makes it necessary to give higher relative priority to the preparation and processing of documents than of publications, except those that are themselves required for meetings.

41. This practice has led to difficulties in setting reliable dates for the issuance of publications, which can be delayed. Any proposed reorganization of the publications production process, however, must take these facts into account.

42. An interdepartmental Publications Promotion Group, chaired by the Sales and Marketing Section of the Department of Public Information, was formed by the Working Committee of the Publications Board in 1996. The Group's objective is to provide an additional mechanism to help author departments with the planning of their publications. It allows for informal exchanges of information in connection with the budgeting, design and production, and promotion of specific publications before they reach the production stage.

> Recommendation 11. As the basis for producing publications in a cost-effective manner as well as the basis for the new budgetary system proposed in recommendation 7, the United Nations Secretariat should develop a cost-accounting system by the end of 1998 in order to have knowledge of the full cost of publications (i.e., direct and, to the extent possible, indirect costs).

43. The Secretariat is currently undertaking a study on the development of a cost-accounting system that would address the question of direct and indirect costs related to publications. Such a system, however, would not necessarily imply that each budget section would reflect the resource requirements for all phases of issuing a publication.

44. The Office of Legal Affairs has stated that, for example, while the cost of typesetting and printing the United Nations Treaty Series is known, the related costs of compiling and processing information are only a matter of conjecture. In its view, an effective system for costing publications in a realistic manner would enable the Organization to determine the most appropriate sale prices.

> Recommendation 12. Pending the establishment of a cost-accounting system, an annual planning of the printing workload should be made, current outsourcing practices on publications should be reviewed and a review should be conducted by the Secretariat to provide some flexibility to the use of the external printing account for internal printing purposes, as appropriate.

45. There is wide Secretariat support for making effective and cost-efficient use of internal reproduction facilities for publications. The fact that the Reproduction Section at Headquarters is now able to produce high-quality colour work and bind large volumes with less disruption to the immediate production of parliamentary documentation than in the past are positive developments. However, the shift to increased use of internal printing facilities, as well as the increased in-house electronic processing of publications, have additional cost implications. The Publications Board and author departments strongly support the Joint Inspection Unit's recommendation that more flexibility in the use of the 340 external printing accounts be allowed. Those funds could be used to help defray expenses related to internal printing, such as for overtime, paper and other supplies, and for special processes, including colour proofing. It would be welcomed if the General Assembly supported this recommendation.

46. Advance planning of the printing workload could facilitate increased use of internal printing. However, figures established at the beginning of a biennium remain highly hypothetical, as submission dates for publications frequently

change in the course of two years in accordance with changes in capacity and the absolute need to handle other work.

47. A review of current outsourcing practices on publications could be undertaken, in which a streamlining of procurement practices could be examined.

> Recommendation 13. Once a cost-accounting system is established, the question of an appropriate mode of printing - internal or external, mix of the two, partial outsourcing, etc. - should be reviewed/reconsidered first by the Secretariat and a proposal made to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session.

48. The implementation of the recommendation would depend on the institution of a cost-accounting system. As previously stated, given the increased volume and range of publications now being printed internally, the internal option has become a vital means of realizing the Organization's publishing objectives during a period of budgetary constraint. While a thorough review of the cost-effectiveness of internal versus external printing could be useful, experience has suggested that the Organization's varied needs are best met at present through a judicious mix of both printing options. Any such review of printing costs should take into account an assessment of acquiring "print-on-demand" capacity.

> Recommendation 14. In view of potential as well as proved advantages of the use of advanced technologies, including electronic publishing, the increased use of such technologies for the publishing process should be enhanced by the Secretariat and a general shift towards the various forms of electronic publishing should be intensified and due regard paid to cost recovery and access to such electronic products in developing countries.

49. The Inspectors acknowledge in their report the impressive strides the Secretariat has made in utilizing new technologies, both in the production process and in the dissemination of information. The proposals made under this recommendation are already acknowledged goals of the Secretariat, as previously stated, and will be pursued by all departments as aggressively as resources permit.

50. The foundation for an "electronic United Nations" was completed on 30 June 1997, by which time every permanent mission in New York was connected to the Internet and offered training, and was able to access the United Nations Web site and documents on the optical disk system. Electronic publishing, in particular the use of the Internet, is capitalizing on the unparalleled name recognition and interest accorded the United Nations and its activities around the world. It is significantly widening access to the materials of the Organization in a cost-effective manner and offers potential for future savings to the Organization. The United Nations has clearly come a long way since launching its Web site on the Internet as a pilot project in June 1995.

51. The Department of Public Information responded to the need for increased coordination by assembling a small section to plan, design, implement and maintain an interesting, time-sensitive and rich information site on the Internet. That section, which receives technical back-up and support from the

Information Technology Services Division of the Department of Management, serves as a focal point for issues and queries relating to electronic information. A centralized United Nations Secretariat Web site, which points to other United Nations Web sites and gophers, has been established by the section, which also continues to help organize data for the Web and structure the information presented. It also monitors posted information for appropriateness and potential duplication, maintains and services the centralized Web site and coordinates training of staff to handle Web site designs and updates.

52. Directives entitled "Guidelines for information providers on contributing information to the UN Home Page" have been prepared. Also, a strategy paper entitled "Internet: the UN and the electronic information future" was produced by an interdepartmental working group at Headquarters and approved by the Publications Board in December 1996. The latter includes an extensive annex on copyright and other intellectual property issues, which was submitted by the Office of Legal Affairs. Both the guidelines and the strategy paper were presented to the Inter-Agency Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications in June 1997.

53. Almost all Secretariat publications are created on electronic systems and pass through many stages of production in electronic (digital) formats. They may then be published as electronic or hard-copy publications. Output in electronic format, however, usually requires conversion or other manipulation of the electronically manufactured version.

54. Cost recovery for electronic products has been advocated by the General Assembly. To this end, subscription services have been developed for the United Nations Treaty Series and the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics on-line, and are being developed for the optical disk system. Member States receive all products free of charge, and tiered pricing is established for developing countries. Recurrent publications are also being produced on CD-ROM and sold.

55. United Nations products developed for the Internet only (no print version) are an innovation in electronic publishing that provide a new variation on the theme of the "publications option". The Department of Public Information's CyberSchoolBus, an award-winning educational service on the United Nations Web server, is a particularly exciting example of this type of product. In a visually stimulating and content-rich environment, it offers real-time projects, weekly quizzes and resources for teachers, students and the public at large.

56. At present, electronic publishing is treated almost universally in the publishing industry as a supplement to print publications, not an alternative. In this connection, it must be remembered that Member States have mandated that print materials should retain their importance for the foreseeable future, since electronic dissemination still reaches only a small part of interested constituents. For this reason, printed publications remain essential as reference material and handouts.

57. While the encouragement of electronic publishing in the JIU report is welcomed, it must at the same time be underscored that this work is at present in the form of an "add-on" within the Secretariat. Publications are first produced in a print version and the provision of electronic versions represents

additional work and resources. In this connection, the Secretariat is working to respond to a General Assembly mandate to digitize older publications, such as the Official Records of the Security Council, for use on CD-ROM or the optical disk system. However, a consequence of the rapid advancements in electronic publishing in the Secretariat is that provision of funds for this important work has been largely left out of the budgetary process.

> Recommendation 15. Cooperative arrangements, in particular joint publications between the United Nations Secretariat and other entities, should be promoted by the Secretariat when feasible, with a view to encouraging a single and consolidated publication on identical or similar subjects.

58. Under reforms now being considered, increased cooperation among various bodies of the United Nations system in the substantive areas would enhance the opportunities to work together in a number of areas, including publications.

59. Author departments report that the cooperative arrangements recommended by the Inspectors are being made and are strongly supported. United Nations staff are encouraged to maintain ongoing contacts with their counterparts in the system, with a view to, among other things, developing joint publications. ESCWA has observed that consolidating publications of a similar nature system-wide should be given serious consideration, although various publications addressing similar issues should not always be regarded negatively. Such publications may address the same subjects from different perspectives and may be different in scope. Any consolidation, however, should be done at the planning stage, and to make this feasible ESCWA has suggested beginning the exercise with recurrent publications because they could be identified in advance. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs is of the view that because individual programmes clearly have different focuses and agendas, the recommendation should be understood to mean "when appropriate".

60. Regarding the preparation of interdisciplinary/joint publications with other regional commissions or entities, the Economic Commission for Europe would suggest that three criteria be met: the decision should be taken on a voluntary basis by interested agencies; the objective of the publication should be to provide a variety of views and experiences on specific issues; and the time-frame for publications should be realistic and agreed upon by the organizations involved.

61. This JIU recommendation could be considered in the framework of existing inter-agency coordination arrangements.

> Recommendation 16. Sales income reports, indicating total revenues from various sales channels, should be produced and reviewed monthly or at least quarterly by the Secretariat.

62. This recommendation is welcomed, as the provision of timely and accurate sales income statements on a regular basis is urgently required by the Sales and Marketing Section of the Department of Public Information for its efficient functioning. Increased cooperation within the Secretariat, coupled with the technical possibilities facilitated by the Integrated Management Information

System (IMIS), should make possible the regular and timely generation of this necessary information in compliance with the JIU recommendation. The same information is also required with respect to the royalties generated from external publishing projects.

Recommendation 17. With a view to using income generated by the sale of publications in a more rational manner, while at the same time providing incentives for more cost-effective publishing activities, the current treatment of sales income should be reviewed by the Secretariat and a proposal made to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session for consideration of a more flexible treatment of sales income as well as for a related creation of a self-supporting publications fund or account.

63. Sales income is used for marketing, promotion and distribution activities that are carried out by the Sales and Marketing Section on behalf of author departments. Only the net revenue is returned to the General Fund. There is no inconsistency with this JIU recommendation and the current practice of the Organization, the only difference being that such expenditures have not been reflected in individual budget sections.

64. On the other hand, more flexible treatment of sales income is a proposal that has received strong support from author departments and other entities. It was elaborated upon in the previously mentioned 1993 publications policy report (A/C.5/48/10). Departments have expressed the need to receive a portion of the revenues earned by their publications for specific purposes associated with the cost of developing publications. Also, the sales programme is currently limited, since an increase in its net revenues does not necessarily result in a commensurate budgetary increase in the resources required to expand its operation. The recommendation for further study of the possibility of making resources available to author departments for product development, maintenance of databases, start-up costs and other activities to increase sales revenue is a positive one which is welcomed. The matter is under discussion by the Publications Board's Sales Promotion Group and a proposal can be prepared for General Assembly consideration.

65. In this connection, it is worth noting that JIU has stated in its report that within the United Nations system, there are a number of organizations that have a publications fund or account, financed primarily by the revenue generated from the sale of publications.

Recommendation 18. More vigorous and systematic sales promotion should be conducted by the Secretariat with the aim of maximizing financial returns to the United Nations.

66. This recommendation recognizes the importance of the sales and marketing operation, as well as the need for strong promotion of sales publications. Marketing activity is a key function within the sales operation and innovative approaches to selling United Nations publications will continue to be introduced. The wide range of promotional activities currently being utilized include advertisements; book reviews; direct mail campaigns; production of a sales catalogue, also made available on Internet; participation at book fairs, exhibits and UN conferences; electronic marketing; user surveys; and the

"adoption programme" targeting professors and other educators. Author departments are encouraged to collaborate closely in the successful marketing of their publications. It must be stressed, however, that marketing activities are expensive, and therefore the necessary funds to perform this function must be made available.

67. It should be pointed out that the reason for promoting sales of United Nations publications goes beyond the mere commercial purpose of maximizing financial returns for the Organization. Dissemination through sales channels ensures that the unique intellectual output of the United Nations is transmitted throughout the world in a systematic and quantifiable way. Publications sales information can be an important measure of real interest in a publication. This market-based indication of commercial value can be more reliable than a readership survey in determining the value attached by users to various publications. It has been suggested that sales and marketing of publications should be considered as an integral part of the publications process, not as a late "add-on" as is often the case. To this end, efforts to provide this area with greater flexibility to participate, with resources from its revenues, in the preparation of marketable publications, to target markets and market niches and to work out cooperative arrangements with the non-profit and private sectors in publishing should be encouraged.

68. At the same time it must be emphasized that the cost-recovery objective should not dominate the dissemination objective. The Office of Legal Affairs has expressed the view that it is particularly important in the field of international law that information is freely disseminated to institutions and people in the developing world. In the case of the Department of Public Information, for example, free distribution of certain of its materials is crucial to the achievement of its public information mandate.

CONCLUSION

69. Several author departments have expressed the view that, although the Joint Inspection Unit's mandate was to conduct a comprehensive survey of the extent to which recurrent publications could be made more cost-effective, the resulting report does not make distinctions between recurrent and non-recurrent publications, newsletters and electronic products.

70. Also, departments have suggested that several additional points relating to the publications process could have been addressed in the report. Since publications shape much of the public's perception of the Organization and are instrumental in making widely available the results of significant substantive work, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is of the view that quality review and assurance should play a major role in any assessment of the Organization's publications programme and policies. On this subject, ESCWA has suggested that part of the budget could be used for paying honoraria for a board of specialized readers to evaluate a number of selected key publications in each organization.

71. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs notes also that the current responsibilities of legislative bodies and Secretariat units in establishing

extensive free distribution lists should be reviewed. In its view, this matter deserves an additional recommendation.

72. Another point that the Inspectors did not raise is the importance of copyright enforcement. Increasingly, United Nations material is being repackaged and sold without authorization, particularly through electronic means. This is a problem that the system must urgently confront. The Publications Board secretariat has prepared a questionnaire for distribution to other agencies and programmes of the system to seek their experiences in this area and perhaps help develop a common response.

73. Oversight and review procedures ensure that modifications are continually being made in this complex process. The report of JIU has provided recommendations on how further improvements can be made. Full consideration of the recommendations could undoubtedly lead to greater effectiveness and efficiencies in the publishing activities of the Organization.